

FORM OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COLLEGE  
OF PHYSICIANS OF PHILADELPHIA.

in

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American Museum, October, 1787.

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envenomed dart from the worthy breast.

Cease to read ; and the evil dies of itself : cease to purchase ; and the venal calumniator will drop his useless pen.

Think, while the cruel smile yet mantles on your cheek, that your own heart may be the next that is wrung by the malignant tale.

The amiable friend of your choice—the sister, endeared to you by the tender ties of blood—the blooming daughter you educated with such anxious care—

Yourself—may be the next devoted victim.

Reflect one moment, and you will execrate the barbarous pleasure you have felt, on reading these slanderous chronicles of falshood.

You wish to be amused. I pardon, I commend your wish : but you may be amused without wounding the better feelings of your soul.

Believe me, the human mind is curious, not malignant.

It delights in well-painted pictures of life and manners, but does not demand, that they shall be drawn in shade.

The lovely form of virtue—of virtue, crowned by prosperity, or nobly struggling with the tide of adverse fortune—will amuse, will interest, will charm, beyond the blackest tints, wrought by the baleful hand of the literary assassin.



*Form of the constitution of the college of physicians of Philadelphia.*

**T**HE physicians of Philadelphia, influenced by the conviction of the many advantages that have arisen in every country from literary institutions, have associated themselves, under the name and title of the college of physicians of Philadelphia.

The objects of this college are, to advance the science of medicine, and

thereby to lessen human misery, by investigating the diseases and remedies which are peculiar to our country ; by observing the effects of the different seasons, climates, and situations, upon the human body ; by recording the changes, that are produced in diseases by the progress of agriculture, arts, population, and manners ; by searching for medicines in our woods, waters, and the bowels of the earth ; by enlarging our avenues to knowledge, from the discoveries and publications of foreign countries ; by appointing stated times for literary intercourse and communications, and by cultivating order and uniformity in the practice of physic.

For the purpose of obtaining these objects, the following rules have been adopted :

1st. The college shall consist of twelve senior fellows, and of an indefinite number of junior fellows and associates.

2d. The senior and junior fellows shall reside in the city, or district of Southwark or Liberties of Philadelphia.

3d. The associates shall consist of such persons of merit, in the profession of medicine, who do not live within the limits described for fellows, without any regard to diversity of nation or religion.

4th. The junior fellows shall consist of such practitioners of physic, as are of good capacity, of good moral characters, and decent deportment, and who are not under twenty-four years of age.

5th. The senior fellows shall be chosen from among the juniors, by the seniors only, within one month after a vacancy is declared. The junior fellows and associates shall be chosen by the joint votes of all the fellows. Three-fourths of the whole number of senior fellows, shall concur in the admission of seniors ; and three-fourths of the fellows shall con-

cur in the admiffion of juniors and associates.

6th All laws, regulations, and appointments to offices, fhall be made by a majority of the joint votes of all the fellows.

7th. The officers of the college fhall confift of a president, vice-president, four cenfors, a treasurer, and fecretary, who fhall be chofen annually, from amongst the feniior fellows on the firft Tuefday in July.

8th. The ftated meetings of the college fhall be on the firft Tuefday in every month. Befides thefe meetings, the president, or, in his abfence or indifpofition, the vice president fhall have power to call extraordinary meetings, whenever important or unexpected bufinefs fhall require, of which he fhall be the judge. It fhall likewife be in the power of any fix fellows of the college, who concur in their defires of a meeting, to authorife the president, or, in his abfence or indifpofition, the vice president to call it.

9th. The bufinefs of the cenfors fhall be, to infpect the records and examine the accounts and expenditures of the college, and report thereon. And all communications made to the fociety, after being read at one of their ftated meetings, fhall be referred to the cenfors, and fuch other members of the college, as fhall be nominated for the purpofe, to examine and report thereon to the college, who fhall determine, by a vote taken by ballot, on the propriety of publishing them in their tranfactions.

10th. The bufinefs of the fecretary fhall be to keep minutes of all the meetings and tranfactions of the fociety, and to record them in a book provided for that purpofe; likewife to receive and preferve all books and papers belonging, and letters addreffed to the college.

11th. The bufinefs of the treasurer fhall be to receive all the monies of the college, and to pay them

to the order of the president, or vice-president only, which order fhall be the voucher of his expenditure.

12th. Every member of the college fhall have a certificate of his election, with the feal of the college affixed thereto, figned by the president and vice-president, and counterfigned by the cenfors and fecretary. The ftyle of certificates, and all addreffes from the college, fhall be as follows: "The president (or vice-president) and college of physicians."

13th. No affociate, who comes to refide within the limits mentioned in the fecond rule, fhall be admitted to a fellowship in the college, without being elected in the manner prefcribed for the admiffion of junior fellows. No new member fhall be chofen, who has not been propofed at a previous ftated meeting.

14th. No law or regulation fhall be adopted, that has not been propofed at a previous ftated meeting: nor fhall any part of the constitution be altered without being propofed for confideration for three months. The president, or vice-president, when he takes the chair, fhall have no vote, except in queftions where there is an equal divifion of voices: two-fifths of the fellows fhall be a quorum for all bufinefs, except the election of members, the expenditure of money, the making of laws, or the altering of the constitution: in the three laft cafes, a majority of the fellows fhall be a quorum.

15th. Every fellow, upon his admiffion, fhall fubfcribe to the above rules, as a testimony of his confenting to be bound by them. He fhall, at the fame time, pay into the hands of the treasurer the fum of eight dollars, towards the eftablifhing a fund for the ufe of the college: he fhall likewife pay two dollars annually, for the fame purpofe.

The following physicians are the prefent members of the college:  
John Redman, Abraham Chovet,

John Jones,	John Morgan,
W. Shippen, jun.	Adam Kuhn,
Benjamin Rush,	G. Clarkson,
Samuel Duffield,	Thomas Parke,
J. Hutchinson,	G. Glentworth.

*Junior fellows.*

Robert Harris,	John Carlson,
Benj. Duffield,	W. W. Smith,
John Foulke,	S. P. Griffiths,
James Hall,	John Morris,
Andrew Ross,	W. Clarkson,
William Currie,	Benjamin Say.
John Lynn,	

All communications, that are included in the objects of the college, specified in the preamble of the constitution, may be addressed to the secretary, (post paid, when they are sent by that conveyance) or to any other fellow of the college.

It is to be hoped, the friends of medical science in every part of the united states, will concur in promoting, by useful communications, the important designs of this institution.

Published by order of the college,  
*JAMES HUTCHINSON*, sec.

The present officers of the college are,

*President.*

John Redman,

*Vice-president.*

John Jones.

*Censors.*

William Shippen, jun.

Benjamin Rush,

John Morgan,

Adam Kuhn.

*Treasurer.*

Gerardus Clarkson.

*Secretary.*

James Hutchinson.



SIR,

IT is by order of the society for alleviating the miseries of public prisons, that I do myself the pleasure to enclose you the address lately framed by them to the friends of humanity, which being desirous of see-

ing generally diffused, they have directed me to request you will, for that purpose, insert in your Museum—By so doing, you will oblige the society, and your very humble servant,

J. SWANWICK,  
*Secretary to the society.*

Mr. M. Carey.

*To the friends of humanity.*

THE society for alleviating the miseries of public prisons, beg leave to solicit the attention of the public, to the objects of their institution.

From the weakness and imperfection of all governments, there must necessarily exist, in every community, certain portions of distress, which lie beyond the reach of law to prevent or relieve. To supply this deficiency in Philadelphia, this society was instituted: and if a judgment be formed of its future usefulness, from the success that hath attended its first efforts, there is reason to believe, it will prove a blessing to our city, not only as the means of relieving distress, but likewise of preventing vice.

The funds of the society, at present, are confined to an annual subscription of ten shillings from each of its members, and a ground rent, of fourteen pounds, the donation of the hon. John Dickinson, esq. These sums are by no means equal to the numerous objects and extensive wishes of the society. They have, therefore, taken this method of soliciting further benefactions from their fellow citizens. To a people professing christianity, it will be sufficient only to mention, that acts of charity to the miserable tenants of prisons, are upon record among the first of christian duties. From the ladies therefore, whom heaven has blessed with alluence, and the still greater gift of sympathy—from gentlemen, who acknowledge the obligations to humanity—from the relation of our species to each other, in a common



and universal Father—and from the followers of the compassionate Saviour of mankind, of every rank and description—the society thus humbly solicit an addition to their funds.

Donations for the charitable and humane purposes of the society, will be received by Mr. Thomas Rodgers, in Elbow-lane.

Signed by order of the society,  
**WILLIAM WHITE**, president.  
*Philadelphia, August 16, 1787.*



*On the doctrine of chance: containing remarks on Ethan Allen's Oracles of Reason—supposed to have been written by the rev. Mr. Dwight, author of the Conquest of Canaan.*

Mr. Printer,

**T**HE world has been long entertained by debates on the subject of chance. Most men, pursuing the plain dictates of common sense, have considered chance as referring solely to human apprehension; and have confidently averred, that events are contingent only because we discern not the connexion between them and the causes by which they are produced. In the eye of the Creator, they have supposed the idea of chance a nihility: and the connexion, between cause and effect, they have conceived to be indispensably necessary, and uniformly actual, in all things. The Epicurean or atomic philosophers, so called, I suppose, from the peculiar size of their understanding, have taught the doctrine of chance in a very different manner. These gentlemen have asserted, that the mighty frame, which we call creation, resulted from mere casualty, from the fortuitous concurrence of these atoms, which some men have mistakenly supposed to communicate their own name to this system of philosophy. Thus, while one class of men conceived of chance as one of those nothings,

which, in large herds, people the sick brain of a dreaming philosopher—another class have regarded her ladyship with such high respect, as to think her the most proper person to fill the throne of the universe, which they have conceived to be vacant of any other incumbent.

Perhaps in this case, as in most others, the direct road to truth lies between these very diverse opinions. I cannot but flatter myself, Mr. Printer, that in a train of very learned and laborious reflexions on this subject, I have discovered both these classes of disputants to have fallen into errors of an almost equal magnitude. I flatter myself, also, that I have alighted upon a happy mode of reconciling these contending parties, and persuading them to greater degrees of mutual civility.

The doctrine of chance has long appeared to me of more significance, than mankind have usually acknowledged. Yet I cannot persuade myself to attribute to it the universal importance taught by the Epicureans. For some time, indeed, I doubted its reality: as, I suppose, many of the readers of this essay have hitherto done. But several very nice and interesting reasons have convinced me, and will, I presume, convince them, that such doubts have no foundation.

Among these reasons, Mr. Printer, a very forcible one is found in the original existence of that species of worms, usually called earth-worms or angle-worms. These worms, it is now known, by ocular demonstration, and by testimonies innumerable, (I need not tell you of how high authority) derive their origin immediately from chance. In proof of this fact, it is made manifest, by the same convincing evidence, that multitudes of them descend in the various showers of rain, which fall, from time to time, during the summer season. They have been found, Mr. Printer,

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